

Message Text

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TAGS: EEWT, ENRG, UR
SUBJECT: FLUOR CORPORATION REPORTS SOVIET PLANS TO
CONSTRUCT NATURAL GAS PROCESSING PLANT ON CASPIAN

1. THE FLUOR CORPORATION HELD A THREE-DAY
TECHNICAL SEMINAR IN USCO, JANUARY 19-21, IN
COOPERATION WITH JAPANESE FIRMS NICHIMEN, LTD.,
AND JAPAN STEEL WORKS, LTD. SUBJECT OF THE
SEMINAR WAS FLUOR'S PROCESS FOR NATURAL GAS
PROCESSING AND REFINING. ACCORDING TO FLUOR
VICE PRESIDENT DAVIS, ATTENDANCE BY SOVIET
TECHNICIANS AND SPECIALISTS WAS ON THE LIGHT
SIDE BUT BOTH HE AND HIS JAPANESE COLLEAGUES WERE
WELL PLEASED BOTH WITH HIGH LEVEL AND CALIBER OF
SOVIET PARTICIPANTS. IN ALL, ABOUT 60 SOVIETS
ATTENDED THREE-DAY EVENT.

2. ALTHOUGH DAVIS WAS NOT ABLE TO BE SPECIFIC,
HE SAID PURPOSE OF SEMINAR WAS TO BOLSTER
FLUOR'S BID TO CONSTRUCT LARGE NATURAL GAS
PROCESSING PLANT AT ASTRAKHAN ON CASPIAN SEA.
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DAVIS SAID FLUOR IS ALREADY WORKING WITH
JAPANESE TO CONSTRUCT THREE GAS PROCESSING
PLANTS IN WESTERN SIBERIA, EACH HAVING A PRICE
TAG OF ABOVE \$200 MILLION. THOSE PROJECTS,
HE EXPLAINED, WERE BEING ENGINEERED TO PROCESS
"ASSOCIATED GAS," WHEREAS ASTRAKHAN PLANT WOULD
PROCESS NATURAL GAS HAVING A HIGH SULPHUR CONTENT.

DAVIS INDICATED THAT PROPOSED NEW PLANT WOULD ALSO
BE IN \$200 MILLION RANGE.

3. ASKED WHETHER THIS MAJOR NEW PROJECT WOULD BE
INCLUDED IN NEXT FIVE YEAR PLAN (1981-1985), DAVIS
THOUGHT IT DEFINITELY WOULD AND NOTED THAT PRELIMINARY
DRILLING IN GAS FIELDS WHICH WILL FEED NEW PLANT
AROUND ASTRAKHAN HAD ALREADY BEGUN.

4. COMMENT: EMBASSY WAS NOT AWARE OF SOVIET PLANS TO
CONSTRUCT MAJOR NATURAL GAS PROCESSING FACILITY IN OR
NEAR ASTRAKHAN. WE WILL, HOWEVER, KEEP EARS TO GROUND
ON THIS ALLEGED NEW PROJECT AND REPORT SIGNIFICANT
DEVELOPMENTS AS THEY OCCUR. ALTHOUGH DAVIS DID NOT SAY
SO, WE PRESUME THAT FLUOR WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR
ENGINEERING AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT WHILE JAPANESE
INVOLVEMENT WILL CENTER MAINLY ON SUPPLYING EQUIPMENT
AND HARDWARE. TOON

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